



Stryker unit now calls Germany 'home'

By 1st Armored Division Public Affairs
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VILSECK, Germany (Army News Service, Sept. 18, 2006) – Another piece of U.S. Army, Europe's ongoing transformation fell into place Sept. 15 during ceremonies welcoming USAREUR's newest warriors, the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

Guests of honor – including Gen. David D. McKiernan, USAREUR's commanding general; Maj. Gen. Fred D. Robinson, 1st Armored Division commanding general; William R. Timken Jr., U.S. ambassador to Germany; and Dr. Edmund Stoiber, Bavarian Minister-President – joined 3,000 Soldiers from the 2nd SCR as they uncased the unit's colors at Vilseck Army Airfield.

The ceremony marked the return of the 2nd Cavalry to Germany after a 14-year absence, and the arrival of the first Stryker unit in Europe.

The 2nd SCR will provide USAREUR with the Army's most mobile and modern combat system, one that also will benefit U.S. European Command and NATO, McKiernan said.

"Putting the 2nd SCR here reaffirms our strong commitment to NATO and our European allies," McKiernan said, "whom we have a long history of sharing our assets with. Positioning the regiment here will help to strengthen our ties (within theater)."

Previously, the regiment was based at Fort Lewis, Wash., as part of the 25th Infantry Division, but now falls under the 1st Armored Division.

Three hundred Stryker vehicles were moved to Bremerhaven, Germany, in late July before being shipped on railroad cars to Vilseck, near Joint Multinational Training Command headquarters.

Now the 2nd SCR plans to use JMTC's Grafenwoehr Training Area as its backyard playing field.

The result, McKiernan said, "will be expeditionary training and operational readiness that can be exported throughout the European Command's area of operations."

Stoiber echoed the general's sentiments: "I believe that joint training and mutual understanding between Soldiers of different NATO members are crucial to joint foreign deployments that establish and preserve peace."

The welcome home ceremony marked the end of a year-long transition period, said 2nd SCR commander, Col. John RisCassi, who added, "Very shortly, we will be moving out into the training areas."

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RisCassi also noted his unit's strong ties to Germany, particularly in Bavaria.

"The 2nd SCR has a historical connection to Germany, and this regiment has a strong sense of heritage," the colonel said. "That is one of the reasons this regiment was tapped to return here."

Stoiber agreed wholeheartedly, saying, "The U.S. Army and Bavaria have been closely connected for 60 years and cannot be separated."

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